

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07998091 2

THE
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PRESENTED BY

~~Rev. Wilton Merle Smith~~

29 August 1917

1. Clergy. - Duty and life.
with

11/17

William Mark Smith

Huntington
ZIT

PERSONAL CHRISTIAN LIFE

IN

THE MINISTRY.

THREE LENTEN LECTURES

IN THE

GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,

1883.

BY

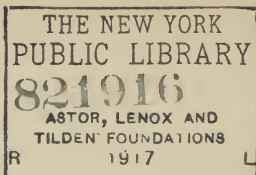
F. D. HUNTINGTON, S.T.D.,

BISHOP OF CENTRAL NEW YORK,

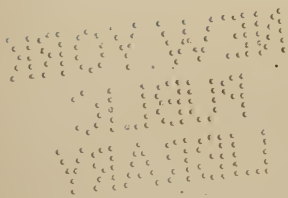
NEW YORK:

JAMES POTT & CO., CHURCH PUBLISHERS.

1884.



COPYRIGHT, 1884,
By JAMES POTT & CO.



PRESS OF J. J. LITTLE & CO.,
NOS. 10 TO 20 ASTOR PLACE, NEW YORK.

THESE addresses, delivered under the title of "The Relation of the Inward Life of the Clergy to their Public Offices," are put to print in compliance with a request of fifty-five members of the Senior and Middle Classes, dated September twenty-fourth, 1883.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. SINGLENESS OF HEART.....	7
II. SPIRITUAL SENSIBILITY.....	33
III. SELF-SACRIFICE.....	55

SINGLENESS OF HEART.

WE have no time for anything prefatory. The essential nature of the Kingdom of God among men, the drift of our recent Church-life, and such personal experience as I have had, establish in my mind the conviction that the work to which you are so near, and are drawing nearer every day, needs nothing so much as that it be made deeper work ; that we need to deepen it more than we need to extend it, to diversify it, or to enlighten it with mere intellectual light, and that we cannot deepen it much in others unless we deepen it first in ourselves.

The Ministry of Christ can never fulfill its calling so long as it takes its rule of living from the standards of the prevailing social Christianity. There are two orders of life, the order of nature and the order of grace. Whether the laws of the natural and the supernatural kingdoms are identical, as science and faith together may yet make them appear, is not now considered. I use distinctions that are actual and familiar. The Christian Priesthood belongs in the Order of Grace. It is sheltered under gracious covenants ; it is sustained and comforted by gracious nourishments ;

it is bound by gracious but unyielding obligations ; it must meet and abide a gracious but awful judgment. You may say all Christian people are in the Order of Grace, ordained and unordained alike, by virtue of Holy Baptism, with its gifts, promises, and helps, and this is true. But there is a difference none the less ; and it is not merely a difference of degree. There is a difference that is specific. The laity live and work principally and necessarily in the sphere of this world. Their relations to the world may be modified, regulated, elevated, sanctified, by the spiritual powers that play in the Kingdom of Christ. The men of the Ministry, on the other hand, live primarily and work distinctively in the Kingdom of God's grace. It is their home, their intrusted estate, their field of husbandry, their banqueting-house, wide and satisfying. They do a gracious service. They breathe a holy air. They handle consecrated things. They rise up every morning to sacred labors, and lie down every night under an almost audible heavenly benediction. They draw "all their cares and studies this way." Is not the difference real and apparent ? Outwardly at least lay people live in the natural world, though guided in it by the Spirit. Clergymen live in the supernatural, dealing from it with the world of natural humanity. This world is visited by the Kingdom of God coming down in the Second Adam and the new creation from on high. The Ministry is of that Kingdom from on high ; it represents that new

creation ; it is the voice, the ambassadorship, the visible agent of the Lord from Heaven, a quickening spirit. Heaven is opened before and above other men ; it is behind as well as before, and always peculiarly *with* the men of the Ministry ; and it is their privilege, incomparable and unspeakable, to work directly from its inspiration and by its power.

As this pre-eminence, not of personal faculty but of august responsibility, is special in kind, so it is conferred by express bestowment in Ordination. Like the tree and herb of the *flora* of the first creation, each divine gift produces “after its kind.” The ordinance is according to the nature of the gift. The Church suffers terribly from superficial views of the grace of Orders. Mind, I am not speaking of an outward dignity, advocating clericalism, or encouraging sacerdotal conceit. God forbid ! The Church suffers terribly from these things too. You will understand me as pointing to the whole spiritual character, tone, inward attitude and habit of individual clergymen as they go about their holy business. If ordination did not transfer the man from one set of relations to another, if it did not alter the whole standing of his soul beyond everything belonging to his official functions, if it did not set him into new scenery, naturalize and domesticate him among superhuman fellow-laborers, and measure him by extraordinary tests of sanctity and self-denial, then it would be—what so many all around us imagine

it to be—a well-devised, interesting, impressive ceremony, and nothing more. Outside the Church, Ordination is hardly supposed to have in it a Divine virtue at all. Inside, its official value is continually asserted, but too often its profound and searching effects on the personal condition of a man's heart and conscience before God are forgotten. Let me entreat you not to overlook them, but rather to make your whole devout life here an expectant, eager preparation to receive them. When you come thither you will have to judge your motives, aims, acts, sacrifices, even your morals, by a peculiar criterion. While you are here making ready for that great hour, you cannot be content to rise in your religious frame no higher than the average religious level outside these walls.

In these few hours that I am to spend with you this week, my dear friends and brothers, I must speak and you must hear according to these profound truths. You cannot expect me, in this season of unusual access to the secret place of the Mercy-seat, in the solemnity which is upon us all alike on the eve-week of our Lord's Passion, to leave the line of tasks given me and come here simply to discuss the elements or to repeat the maxims of scientific ethics. Of the general duties of Christian penitence and prayer, self-scrutiny and discipline, you are reminded by manuals and directories—multiplied and accessible—as well as by your daily worship. We ought to be occupied here, I am sure, with such special aspects of the

higher states and practices of the spiritual man as must come before your conscience and your heart in *the consecration to which you are called*.

The Church in this country wants deacons and priests who have renounced self—self in the three forms of self-indulgence, self-will, and self-promotion. It needs no others. No others can rouse the nation from its spiritual deadness in materialism, in indifference, in frivolity and carnal luxury. Even intellectual disbelief, what there is of it—and there is not half so much of the intellectual anti-Christ as of the sensual—will yield to nothing else so readily. You are wanted, you may be said to be waited for, if you come with that self-forgetful mind. If you do not, if you cannot, then, with the most affectionate earnestness, with sympathy for you as well as a concern for the Faith and Cause of our Lord, I urge you to stop where you are.

Emphatically I say we are not dealing here with the external denials of that Faith, in infidelity, or wilful error, or vice, or civilized heathenism, or the decorous forms of a rationalized Christianity. These are in large part prodigals of a violated conscience. To be sure, they are not disconnected from the internal life of the Church. They are aggravated by its inconsistencies in clergy or people. By subtle fascinations or overbearing force they dilute its doctrine and corrupt its piety. But they do not enter directly into the particular class of difficulties, or the special lines of self-examina-

tion, which engage our attention now. These interests are distinctively spiritual. They relate either to our own hidden walk with God, or else to those special experiences where our public service is most seriously influenced by our personal religion, and is in fact directly dependent upon it. What strikes us as the faulty feature in the religious state of our community? I think it is a certain *thinness* of Christian character. The great truths of the Creed are not denied, perhaps not even questioned; but they are held with a loose hand. Public ordinances of the Church are not despised, but they are respected much as any other customs are respected, social and literary, with a prevailing feeling that they may be attended to or let alone at each man's option or convenience, and let alone without loss. The language about sacred things remains unchanged, but it means less; it is the current paper of a depreciated capital. Some effort is made to keep up the ecclesiastical institution, or to obtain something for missions; but the moment that effort comes into conflict with other expenditures, you see with shame how low the relative rank of God's glorious House and its divine economy is in comparison with the overmastering attractions of business or wealth or recreation. These, just so far as they appear, are signs, I do not see why they are not sure proofs, of what it is fair to call by the name I have given it—a thinness of Christian character. If you prefer it you can call it lightness of conviction, or weakness

of faith, or a decay of zeal. In any case it is what we are here concerned with, not in the community, but in ourselves. We can do much to remedy it. That is to be your high vocation. That it can be done you ought to believe, because the Word, the Promise, the Passion, the Pentecostal Fire and Wind, the Primitive Age, the great periods of religious revival all along, assure you that it can. How to do it is your question. No man can tell you perfectly. You must seek the answer everywhere. Ask it of the heavens above, ask it of the earth beneath, of the depths of solitude, of the heights of holy contemplation, of Scripture and history, and of the heart of man, most of all of the Holy Ghost. Seek the answer till you find it. We are here to-night to seek it.

What I submit to you, then, is that this deep secret is to be revealed to you, and that the power to revive the dwindled energy and chilled life of the Church will be in you, in proportion as your own spiritual life is at once deepened and intensified. This may be said to be a natural law of the supernatural kingdom. The fact is forced upon us to whatever quarter we turn, whether to the general philosophy of spiritual influence, to the necessary conditions of the formation of character, to the great examples and authorities in the past, to the comparative results of the ministrations of different men as we see them around us, to the New Testament, or, finally, to the personal ministry of the Saviour himself. Mark the great spiritual

movements of the Church, such movements as we all must long to see renewed. How have they always begun? Either with a new spirit of consecration, sacrifice, and closer intercourse with God on the part of the clergy, as in the time of the Oratory and St. Sulpice under Philip Neri, Olier, de Condren, and their friends, and in England at Cambridge and Oxford respectively during the last generation, or else in sporadic agitations among the people, which, precisely because they had not the guidance of God's commissioned prophets and priests, were as transient as they were irregular. To say that a pastor or preacher can never be the means of leading individual souls in his charge to a higher religious state than he has himself attained would be saying too much. I suppose it is one of the most startling and humiliating if also in another view one of the most blessed discoveries that many of you will make as you go on, that you are furnished, among other mysterious endowments, with the capacity of doing that very thing. Sacramental grace is not dependent on the man. However it happens, whether it is because our actual infirmities are partly concealed, or simply that God's grace works in ways that we know not, overflowing the measures of the earthen vessels, we do find not infrequently that persons in ordinary circumstances, who are almost exclusively under one clergyman's teaching and with smaller advantages than his own, will pass before him and rise far above him in what makes up a holy character. And yet I think I need

not argue with you that these exceptional facts do not invalidate the ordinary rule of the Kingdom we serve, that in heart, in religious reality, in strength and simplicity and steadiness of faith, in the power of the spirit, we must *be what we teach* if we would have others follow our teaching, or even believe it. How high the head-waters, so much fulness in the stream.

In feeling this to be the first want, I am confirmed by the testimony which comes now and then, and lately more than ever, from brethren who are most truly alive in this ministry, of largest experience, and most honored by abiding fruits. Be it true or be it otherwise that our times are peculiarly unfavorable to walking with God in any vocation, that forces are everywhere acting which dissipate and soften or hinder and unsettle the spiritual mind, that society is indevout, the air dry, the tone of life trivial, we have at any rate enough of these disordering influences on hand to make us very sober, to cast us back on radical principles of self-discipline, and to arraign the inward man with sharp and solemn judgments. Let it be with us, dear brothers, as if we kept a kind of vigil for the Great Commemoration that is at hand with its tender mysteries and meanings,—the Redeemer's agony, cross and grave, seeking at the same time, by looking into that life which is "hid with Christ in God," by fresh resolves and supplications, by a more particular knowledge of our weaknesses and dangers, to be ready to arise and follow the

Master whithersoever he shall lead. How often hereafter will the ear of God hear one and another of you crying in loneliness for help in just this difficult, painful ascent into a noble fulfilment of the vow you will have spoken and the vocation where-with you are called!

Striking directly, then, into the heart of the whole matter, we encounter as the topic lying foremost in order, *Singleness of Heart*, first in your own life and then in your service; what the Ordinal calls "applying yourselves wholly to this one thing." Analyzing the nature of this obligation we must distinguish between what the law of Christ requires of ministers as Christian persons, each one answerable for the ripeness of his own spiritual manhood, and what the same law requires of them as servants of all classes of men for their salvation. The two are inseparable, and yet they are distinct. In almost every respect it is true that what makes for the character of the man makes for the strength of the minister; and yet one of the most disastrous mistakes of our profession is in overlooking the difference; that is, in imagining that all is right in our interior state before God because we are diligent and busy in work. We constantly hear people who are passing judgment on the religious and moral qualities of a minister follow their various descriptive adjectives with the substantive "man:" he is such and such a man, not minister. They expect the common graces, especially the passive ones, in a rather higher degree than in other men;

not a different sort. When they come to advert to experiences peculiar to the profession they are apt to specify traits and forces more of the mental and executive than of the spiritual man. He is "able" or "weak," "successful" or "impracticable," "eloquent" or "dull." Religious qualities are ascribed to the man, secular qualities to the clergyman. We still inquire, therefore, what there is about our calling which differentiates the clerical condition from that of the hearer or parishioner. Put the question in another way. Why are so many earnest pastors and preachers, being daily occupied with duties where there are certainly as many advantages for holy living as there are anywhere, nevertheless conscious of needing exceptional helps, longing for extraordinary illuminations and unusual refreshments from the Fountain of all their light and peace? It is because these duties, at the same time that they lay upon them singular demands for holiness, yet expose them to singular temptations to unholiness,—singular, I mean, in subtlety, complication, plausibility and pertinacity. Perilous indeed is the state of that minister of the Gospel of Christ—I care not what may be his temperament or his attainments or his position—who has not found out *how* subtle, *how* plausible and *how* pertinacious these temptations are. They spring from three chief sources.

First of these is the circumstance that the entire public administration of religion, even in this Church of Christ and his Apostles, is a mixture,

and a mixture in which the two ingredients are likely to conflict with each other at any time, anywhere. It is one part spiritual, and one part material and temporal. The latter may at any time become self-seeking, unsanctified, anti-Christian. There will then be ambiguity if not duplicity, and either one is spiritual weakness, a fruit of spiritual disease. There has never yet been a period since Pentecost when this has not happened. The root-sense of the word "holy" in the scriptural tongues is "separate." We speak of the Church as holy, meaning that it is so in its origin, its purpose, its commission, just as all baptized people in the early Church were called saints. The ideal originates the epithets. The name is the name of hope, as the Hebrews named their children, not of biographical or historical fact. We speak of the Church militant: there never was a division, battalion, regiment, company or rank in the army that was made up of soldiers who were undistracted in their loyalty. I am not saying it could be otherwise, or that it was originally promised it would be otherwise, but so it is. There is a secular side. There is a financial economy. There are buildings, money-interests, money-payments, bargains, salaries, various schemes and devices for conciliating the world in its worldly character. There is a capital opportunity, not to say invitation, you will find, for the entrance and exercise among church-leaders of a policy and a management which have no inherent connection with the Gospel of life and salvation whatever. More-

over, and this is worse, there is a natural alliance between these ecclesiastical secularities and the personal gifts, accomplishments and abilities of the clergy. Here we are. Amid all the sanctities and respectabilities of church-buildings and ceremonies the great Seducer will tempt you many a time to turn your Orders into a market, your Priesthood into a trade, and to sell your soul for some disguised piece of the world's merchandise. It is a fact of immense signification, of tremendous danger. Looking at it in all its appalling risks to ministerial purity where we live, or in all the mischief that has been born of it age after age, we might wonder that scores of young men go skipping into orders with a kind of gay alacrity, as sanguine as if there lay no fearful nest of deadly snares before their feet, as if no fierce and cruel hands of principalities and powers, of the rulers of the darkness of this world, moving in the shadows, were feeling after them to find them out, and to throttle all honor and fealty and simplicity in them if they can. Here is the first alarming condition besetting a clergyman's conscience. It is the world inside the Church using the secular element of its present organization to secularize him, by its bribes and prizes, its official honors and personal reputations, its patronage, vestries and applauses. I think you will agree with me that it has never been more generally aggressive than it is now, on the whole, not even among the ecclesiastical preferences and fortunes of the medieval churches, or in

the English endowments and livings blindly bestowed by politicians or princes. Why? Because here the worldly spirit comes from below as well as from above, and the whole mass of modern society is permeated by a discouraging confusion as to where the line between the world and the Church really runs. You are to live, God willing, and you are to be God's heroes or the devil's cowards, in this fight.

I mention, secondly, what goes along with this seductive secular influence, giving it much of its perilous quality,—a natural susceptibility in us all to be impressed by any kind of power, resource, brilliancy, confusing the moral judgment and biasing the soul in favor of a false worship. It is needless to argue the universality of the illusions springing from this source, or to inquire of what better trait, put into the human nature by the Creator, the vulgar deference to it is a perversion. Young students start with it, carry it with them through their preparation, beyond ordination, possibly to the end of their lives, just as they carry, in various degrees, other features of a half-disciplined or imperfectly consecrated manhood. The result is what the Church has all along been obliged here and there to see, clergymen of good ability, well meaning on the whole, well educated, useful in many ways, who nevertheless live from first to last in a shambling compromise between the principles of the Kingdom which they are sworn to defend and the pretensions or fashions of the world which that

Kingdom was sent down from Heaven to condemn and overthrow. Be it a better salary or a cardinal's hat, a metropolitan parish or an academic title, a snug parsonage or social adulation, whatever reward the secret service to the "other King" may be, it is the same disloyalty. In like circumstances and with equal cleverness they would figure along with Cardinal Wolsey or Paul of Samosata, who, with all their splendor, were but superb types of countless village priests and city preachers bending the knees of their hearts to Mammon, waiting on wealth, afraid of politicians, eager for visible success, rendering unto God only a portion of his clear claim, and unto this modern Cæsar or his courtiers, dressed in a petty and brief authority, a great deal that is not Cæsar's at all. It is only with the degrading effect of such servility and such duplicity on the inner man that we have here to do. I adjure you to look at it through no mist, and early to gird up the loins of your minds to withstand it. Could some purging breath of the Spirit blow away from those who are setting their feet to the service of the Altar all ambition for place and power and display, could they be trained in an unquestioning faith that the Church stands in its own right, is independent of the world around it and only seeks the world's salvation, could they verily believe that neither numbers nor revenues have anything whatever to do with her honor or prosperity, and that her officers have everything they need in having their Master's favor, then how soon

bishops, priests, and deacons would stand forth in every land content, serene, revered and trusted, beyond the reach of vexation, beyond the fear of failure ! A periodical, which utters what many thousands of Americans believe without regretting, says: "The process of religious decay is partly due to the increasing commercial character of the Church organization." We all know that simplicity of living and manners, an apostolical "weanedness from the world," has drawn an involuntary respect and love to Christ's ministers of whatever name, giving them spiritual dominion even in spite of their loss of apostolical order. Retaining that order, ought we not to be ashamed to part with that power ?

There is a third enemy to Singleness of Heart, the more serious in this respect that it presents a puzzling problem to our moral discrimination while it also tries our moral courage. How far is it right for Christ's servant to go in pushing forward into notice any personal gifts or accomplishments he may have, or think he has, in prosecuting the ends of his ministry ? By what means can we separate between making the most of our faculties for the glory of God, and making the most of them for our own glory ? The difference is plain enough stated in this way in words. I am sure we now and then see a minister whose powers are remarkable, and who yet so uses them that, while they incidentally create a reputation for himself, they leave a clear impression that he is

self-forgetful and unambitious. But neither the abstract distinction nor the beautiful example will make your duty easy, whatever your powers may be. Take the matter, for illustration, in so simple a shape as the performance of a single public service, including, if you please, reading and preaching. The better you read and the better you preach the more effectually will all the holy purposes of the occasion be fulfilled, those purposes for which your studies, your vows, your prayers and the Church's gifts in orders prepare you. But it is just as certain also that the better you read or preach the more the hearers will be likely to admire you personally, praise you, set you a little higher in your relative (professional) standing among your brethren, and the more likely it is that you will go away satisfied with yourself. You may be sure that many of the best of God's workmen confess to themselves that they have been all their ministerial lives perplexed by this complication of motives, and that no casuistry can make them complacent at the result. It was a question in the first centuries of the Faith. One of its aspects was the right or wrong of placing young men destined for the Christian priesthood in the schools of famous pagan rhetoricians and philosophers, like that of Libanius at Antioch. On the one hand it was argued that the cause of the Saviour has a right in its servants to the best learning and oratory in the world : on the other, that such heathen culture was not only liable to mis-

lead young scholars and pervert them from the Truth, but that its tendency was to introduce into the Apostolic Church meretricious and ungodly methods foreign to the temper of Christ and the Cross. In substance the same debate may be continued as long as classical literature and forensic practice make a part of the education of candidates: indeed longer than that, for even though the dead languages and the art of elocution were driven utterly out of all our academies, colleges and theological seminaries, there would still be human infirmity enough left to perpetuate the temptation to personal vanity and literary conceit. The further we go into the subject the less practicable anything like a fixed rule is found to be. To resolve that you will execute your public functions with something less than a possible degree of excellence for fear you shall be proud of them, contracting your ability to save your integrity, would be absurd, though instances of it are mentioned in the biographies of morbid Divines,—about as absurd as for a mechanic to do poor work to prevent his employers feeding his avarice by granting him too much pay. And yet who of us is safe with nothing more than a vague and general intention to keep self under? The fire is too hot for that. How can a service be true to the spirit of the Lamb of God who pleased not himself, whose meekness and magnanimity were equally complete and resplendent, or true to the first principles of His Heavenly Society, if there runs all through it

this paltry alternation between the highest and the lowest thoughts, a puerile teeter of the mind between sacrifice and self-seeking? What room, what allowance, what toleration for it is there anywhere in God's Word? But for the patient forbearance and forgiving mercy of our Lord, where should we be? How could He endure the contradiction of us sinners against himself? Some of the saints have been very frank. John Chrysostom was. As you read the homilies of that great master you see that his heart was as simple as his speech was golden. When the men in the audience clapped their hands and women waved their handkerchiefs he not only paused and cried out to them, "The church is no theatre ; applaud me by a living practice of my doctrine ;" that was easy. But he goes on: "When my discourse is received with applause, I confess it, human weakness overcometh me and I am pleased. But when I go home and reflect that you have received no benefit from my sermon, but have lost it in these sounds, I lament it, and feel that I have spoken everything in vain." When king, queen, crowds in the street were most ready to flatter him, he honestly seized the passing favor to arraign them with the keenest condemnation of their sins. Satan had not then wholly debauched the manliness of Christian parishes into the cowardice of dismissing a pastor for denouncing open iniquity. This apostolic rebuker was finally banished from Constantinople and went into the deserts to die. But it was not

the common people that rejected him; their generous instincts clung to him to the last; it was Eudoxia and the Court. "Whatever you may do," he says, once when the whole city seems to have been swept away by a contagion of sensuality, "I know what I have to do. I am responsible for every soul among you, and, whether you shut your eyes or become enraged, I shall so act that I may be pure from the blood of all men, and be able to stand without fear before the judgment-seat of God." Fourteen hundred years later, in a country where the populace is King, we shall be but ill-furnished successors to this exiled John, or to that earlier John by the Jordan to whom he so often looked back as his pattern in boldly rebuking vice, if we are not prepared to find a court, a Eudoxia, or a Herodias, in a self-willed, self-indulgent and capricious community. What we are to pray for is that we may hold fast singleness and sweetness of spirit together.

One rule you certainly can adopt in this regard, and it would be a most wholesome one for your own welfare, for the instruction of those you teach and for the dignity of your office. Never welcome or encourage by any manifestation of pleasure in it a personal compliment for any sacred act belonging to your ministry. Much less is it morally decent to seek by any half-concealed, indirect comment of your own to draw out such commendation. Reading prayers is a sacred act. Preaching is a sacred act. Imagine a Hebrew outside the Tabernacle

complimenting a priest or a high priest on the artistic skill or grace of gesture with which he discharged his sacerdotal duty at one of the national solemnities! Imagine a piece of flattery addressed by Dionysius the Areopagite to St. Paul after he preached at Mars Hill, or anybody praising him for the diction or the logic of one of his Epistles! Remember how many times that heroic and yet "humble man of heart" has emphasized his entire distrust of his own powers and his intense disesteem for the praise of men. I lay some stress on this caution, because I am sure that consistently acting upon it is not only a point of good Christian manners, but that it would destroy a great deal of that lust for approbation which is at once a blemish in our behavior and a poison to our spiritual life. It would operate very much like cutting off the top growth of a weed when you cannot get at the root. Keep cutting and cutting, and finally the noxious thing will die for lack of what its nature lives on through its stock and leaves. The praise is pleasant, but it feeds an appetite. Reject it and the appetite for it will abate, perhaps finally perish. The habit of making a church robing-room a scene for laudatory comments, after we have been worshipping Almighty God and confessing our sins and preaching his Word, is incongruous. The recipient makes but a foolish figure; and if the by-standers' minds were actually uncovered there would be embarrassing disclosures. What should we say if, after the engineer has run his train

properly from one city to another, half a dozen of his fellow-workmen should think it necessary to gather round him to congratulate and eulogize him? He would take it as an insult or a jest. He has done his duty, done his best, just as it is to be supposed the preacher has done his best every time he preaches. If he has done less he ought to be ashamed. Of course this has nothing to do with a simple utterance of gratitude out of the heart for some benefit, comfort, or strength received from a sermon. Such acknowledgments are refreshing cordials after ministerial work. They are legitimate, as they are properly private, and they furnish a part of the wisest guidance we get in bettering our poor productions. Everybody can distinguish the two things from one another. We ought to have some courteous way of letting those about us feel that we understand this difference, and that while the one is distasteful, as every temptation ought to be, the other is acceptable, because it belongs not so much to what we are, or do, or speak, as to the Spirit of Truth who has condescended to use us for the time, and to speak through our lips.

Another consideration which I think ought to make the ablest ministers slow to magnify themselves in their ministry is that, although it has pleased Providence to employ some eminent gifts in all ages in the service of the Church, by far the greater portion of the actual and solid work of the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ has been done by men of moderate parts. I do not forget exceptions.

I remember that when Massillon in his later years entreated that he might be permitted to retire from Paris, and finally carried his point, the authorities interfered and persuaded the Pope to order him back to the metropolis. There are other exceptions far and near, but they are exceptions after all. Of the examples of great religious prosperity in parishes that I can recall, nearly all have been produced by clergymen of average ability, but always by those who in a faithful stewardship made the best possible use of what talents they had, and united common sense, patience, and cheerfulness with hard labor. Indeed, it is somewhat doubtful whether in the long run and in all their bearings the ministries of very celebrated speakers have yielded more than the average measure of benefit or less.

My dear brothers, we want the "single mind." I place that first. It is the mind of Christ. I have hoped by these examples of a common obliquity to turn your attention even while you are here to the underlying and indwelling sin out of which so many of our secular perversions and duplicities arise. The special offence we consider now is the double mind, a perturbed and soiled current of selfish ambitions and appetites running along the course of our consecrated calling. What name shall we give to that spiritual grace or holy frame of the inward man by which this treacherous ambiguity shall be cast out, as fear is cast out by perfect love? Our Blessed Lord's saying in the Sermon on the

Mount suggests the answer: "The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" It is singleness of heart and mind: *ἀπλοτης*. The thing that is *ἀπλους* is a thing that is opened and spread out, without folds or hiding-places, like the expanded canopy, the generous front of the unwrinkled sky, into which all eyes may gaze and see all that is there to be seen; *simplex, sine plicis*. Do we not recognize it at once by its name as that transparent, crystalline purity of soul which we are to pray for and strive after as the fittest and worthiest of all inward states for him who speaks as the ambassador of the Sinless One, in whose lips no guile is found, for him whose hands bear the vessels of the Lord, for him whose chief and unceasing concern is that which is signified in the august phrase, "the cure of souls?" Do we not attribute it involuntarily to every real saint whose image stands, luminous, venerable, enthroned in the hallowed halls of ages past? Surely it is not presumptuous in us to long for it, to try for it, to hope for some increasing measure of it! If we can find out by what avenues the Adversary is most likely to come to assail and spoil it, and so set guards of watchfulness and resolution to protect it—if we can discover what self-denial, what self-discipline, what contemplations or occupations will provide the strongest security

for it, then no vigilance, no scrutiny or pains will be too costly a price for this singleness of heart. Above all, if we see it to be one of the divine marks of the Saviour himself, who is "holy, harmless, and undefiled," seeking it for his sake, we shall then surely find it in him, and in finding it find Himself.

And then how certain you will be to learn from Him not only the true spirit of your own personal life, but also in what humility and constancy, having the insight which the single eye commands, you can do all the least showy and the least promising of the labors set before you! Jesus of Nazareth preached. An English hand, with firm and graphic lines, tells us how he preached. "He often spoke to large audiences, but he never refrained because his listeners were few. What minister charged with such a message as, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life,' would have told it for the first time to a poor sinful woman whom he met by the wayside? Would he not rather have reasoned that his church must be unusually full before such a marvellous announcement could be delivered? Surely many masters in Israel should have been present to hear the answer to the question which has vexed and troubled the Church in all ages, as to where and how the Father was to be worshiped. But no; the same wondering woman, standing with her water-pitcher in her hand, was taught that neither exclusively in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, 'was the Father

to be worshiped, but that the true worshipers worship Him in spirit and in truth.' Jesus knew she would go on her way and stop every one she met to repeat what she had heard, and to say 'Come.' This, too, is our hope when the thought depresses us that these small means and talents of ours can never affect such masses of evil as we see around us. Each rescued soul becomes a light set upon a hill that cannot be hid, and many will make use of this light to guide themselves out of darkness."

I do not know how many of you may have read a little book lately published for Christ's working men—little in bulk, but large in thoughts which stir and upheave the human world—written by one of the women who are doing more to make England noble than titles or coronets. It ends with these words: "Years and years hence, when you have grown old and sit with faded hands folded in the twilight, musing over your past life, see if the fairest, sweetest, most lasting joy is not the recollection of that early labor of love that first swept you up out of yourself into the very life of God, which is the redemption of the world."

God the Father give you the single mind! God the Son deliver you from that idol of the world which the world has named "success!" God the Holy Ghost grant that as he chooses you to stand before him and to serve in his mysteries, so you may never fall from the grace of Holy Orders which you will receive of his bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

SPIRITUAL SENSIBILITY.

LAST evening the subject was that Christian grace of the Ministry known in the New Testament as Singleness of Heart. We pass now to another. To bring it before you the more distinctly, I will ask you to call up before you an imaginary scene which, one day or another as time goes on, many of you here will probably say is not so much a fiction as the copy of a reality.

A minister busily engaged in the varied offices of his calling, working on with a tolerable measure of apparent usefulness, finds himself in some unoccupied hour turning in upon the secret things of his own personal life. It may be late Sunday night. He is alone in his study. The public labor of the day has left him tired, but with the mental mechanism, in spite of some bodily weariness, rather stimulated and limbered than dulled by the eight or ten hours of incessant strain now over. He is in a mixed mood, half satisfaction and half discontent. He has seen some signs of interest, other signs of indifference. There were some at the worship whom he did not expect to see, others absent whom he was anxious to reach. Some of his words went out on wings, Homer's

ἔπεα πτεροεντα, and went home, he thinks, whither they were sent, with a freedom and energy not his own, as if they were arrows shot from a bow drawn by an unseen hand behind him. Others, which were wholly his own, into which he put more of himself, and which no *afflatus* from beyond himself seemed to take up and bear on, fell flat from his lips, far short of any conscience or any heart. He recalls a kind, appreciative look or word from a parishioner or stranger. It gives him pleasure; he does not now stop to ask whether it is the pleasure of vanity caressed or the pleasure of having let in upon some human soul a new impulse to holy living, planted a fertile truth, and put forth an awakening spiritual power. On another face, perhaps the face of a troubler in the parish, he thought he saw a trace of disfavor, coldness or a sneer; he does not now stop to ask whether the pain this gave was because Christ was dishonored, truth rejected, a soul injured, or because it was ominous of waning popularity, threatened the loss of a pew occupant, or hurt his pride. One moment he is mortified that the discourse which he took to church with confidence or hope turned out weak, confused, or unreal, and in his disgust he would be glad never to preach again. But the mood changes, and he gathers courage to struggle once more after that ideal sermon which always is to be, but never is.

So his thoughts run on. Suddenly, somehow, let us believe it is by the untraceable move-

ment of the Spirit of God on his mind, this aimless process is arrested. The point of view is utterly altered. Retrospection gives place to introspection. He looks within himself, and lo, there opens upon him a whole interior world! What kind of a world is it? The people, the faces of the congregation, the interests, success and failure, numbers and income, fame and favor, drift away. New questions arise to search and try him, what manner of man he is. If I am that man, I am thinking of a living circle of persons and things of which I am the accountable centre. The centre should be the heart. Can the circle be expected to be better than the heart is? I am the guide of this people; but what guides me? I am their teacher; but at whose feet do I sit to be taught, in meekness, docility, and obedience? The same passions or infirmities that I deplore or condemn in them, are they not in me also, in forms less gross or obvious indeed, because the very safeguards of my profession require that, but though more subtle and refined, yet just as untrue, unclean, unworthy, ungodly? In a word, to the eyes of Christ how must a merely professional virtue appear? Is not this the very essence of that pharisaism which was about the only thing he unsparingly rebuked, or if carried a little further the hypocrisy which he unqualifiedly cursed? Ought I not to suspect in myself that character which is only a character of conformity; an integrity which might grow out of the position in which I stand; a religiousness which

every interest of my life binds upon me ; a chastity which, if not lost, is only not lost because it would carry away with it standing, influence, reputation, salary, all together to-morrow ; a devotion which is to my prospects in this world exactly what acuteness and adroitness are to a lawyer, or observation to a doctor, or enterprise to a trader ; a zeal and a fervor which are the instrument of my promotion and the measure of my distinction ? Is there no actual pressing peril here ? Amidst all these fair-seeming activities of piety and charity in which I am engaged, is there not a fearful possibility that my motives may gradually degenerate till, in the apathy of solemn details, the torpor of only a perfunctory ministerial operation, I prove no better than the bondmen of the world ? I ask then, not What am I doing ? but What am I ? not How is the parish getting on ? but How does my inmost soul look to God ? What is the real spirit underneath all my work ? Uncover my heart, O my God ! and show me to myself. Am I ready to take up David's cry in the Psalm, " Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart ; prove me and examine my thoughts ? " He will certainly hear me if I entreat sincerely, " Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. O give me the comfort of thy help again, and stablish me with thy free Spirit." When I have been so searched, cleansed, empowered from on high, " Then shall I teach thy ways

unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

We come to another peculiar exposure of the vocation you have chosen, or let me rather say of your souls in that vocation, wherewith you believe you are called of God. I mean the benumbing and perhaps deadening effect of official routine, of the unfelt repetition of sacred tasks. What it leads to is spiritual apathy. Perhaps I may render you a service, such as only an elder brother can render a younger, by putting you on your guard against it. In its earlier stages it renders us superficial in religion, careless in prayer, unequal to great sacrifices, slow in our perceptions of delicate moral discriminations, wanting in vigorous condemnations of sin as well as in clear recognitions of high states or graces, and awkward and impotent in dealing with difficult cases of conscience brought to us by our people. It produces religious mediocrity. We are thinking all the time of the functions and the organs; so many sermons, so many families to be visited, so many calls in a week, so many celebrations of sacraments, so many charities to be organized and regulated, so many accounts to be kept, so many items to be entered in a parish register; we are not thinking so much of the original springs of life whence the function is vitalized and the organs derive their living force. Gradually the parish takes on more and more the aspect of a railroad, a regiment, a factory, or a bank. The minister unconsciously sinks more and more into a function-

ary, a superintendent, a presiding officer, a colonel, a manager. Those horrid phrases which the modern commercial mind has applied to the holy dignities of the Church come then to be fit descriptions: The parish is "run," the pastor and priest is "hired," he is "posted," he is a "stirring man," a "smart preacher," he makes the machine "go." Then certain second-rate qualities, like sagacity, shrewdness, popularity, social plausibility, joined, it may be, if nature has furnished the faculty, with volubility or vocal skill in the pulpit, are advanced to the loftiest estimation in ministerial merit. The mortal elements have encroached on the Divine, and more and more they degrade the mystery and hide the glory.

Perhaps some dim consciousness exists that this process is going on. But conscience is quieted—this is the next stage of decline—by the apology that it is sacred work. There is so much that must be done, and it is done at least in the name of the Lord! The laity will not do their part. Time is cut up. Interruptions come continually to the door. Public affairs are exacting—schools, philanthropy, dinners, conventions, fairs, semi-benevolent entertainments. How can we get leisure to take a long and steady look into the deep eternity, into the starry heights where the lives of saints shine, into the face of Christ? And if we do not, shall we not be excused? We are occupied about sacred things; will not some of the sanctity cleave to our fingers? Here all about us are spiritual

subjects, scriptures, sanctuaries, symbols, robes, attitudes, titles ; we are ordained ; we are leading an ecclesiastical life ; must it not be that somehow the odor of this atmosphere will preserve us, even though we do not stop much to inquire what is going on in the secret recesses within, or do not withdraw and ask the brooding spirit of the Holy One to hide us under the shadow of his wing ? We will hope that by much speaking or much moving our shallow piety will be condoned. "The Lord pardon thy servant in this thing." But will He ? Or will you be satisfied with yourself ? That depends on what your standard is ; on what you long and hope to be. If professionalism will satisfy you, here it is. If a pattern of clerical propriety, or a series of bustling parochial demonstrations, large confirmation classes, filled seats, an astute ecclesiastical generalship *plus* the tones and dress of a parson, are the sum and substance of what our Lord meant when he said : "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ?" or when he rings through and through your heart the piercing questions of the Ordination Office ; if it is sacerdotalism that you covet instead of that profounder priestliness which keeps all the spiritual senses open toward God and heaven while the hands are busy here ; if it is sheer outward success that you seek, instead of God's light in your breast, and God's love in what you speak, and God's mark on what you do—why, then, your Master may probably say of you, as he said of a class not very unlike you

when he was on earth, "Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward." But what the reward will be, what sort of honor, what sort of blessing, what sort of salvation—that is another matter altogether.

There is a further depth of the same delusion, which I shall only touch briefly because, in its extreme at least, it can hardly be supposed to be very frequent. I mean clerical antinomianism. You will see, however, that it is a logical product or sequence of the fallacy that our sacred office protects us from temptation, or exempts us from the full stress of personal obligation, or makes up for us a special code of morality, so that what might be culpable in other men is pardonable in those who are conversant with the forms and duties of religion. Some of the grossest scandals in the Ministry, not only in past history but in our day and country, have sprung from precisely that root. Instead of the consecrated vocation being taken as imposing a responsibility and a motive for a stricter obedience to the moral law, it is taken as setting him who is called in it above that law. This active servant is thought to be of too much importance to the purposes of the Almighty to be judged by ordinary rules. He extenuates transgression in himself, possibly he commits and repeats hidden sin, on no other pretence than that his general external religiousness warrants it. It is one of the most frightful abuses of the perilous art of casuistry, fit to

be ranked with the seductive abominations of Liguori. A fair deduction would be that the nearer man comes to God in his employments, the less scrupulous he may be in his conduct. The link between religion and righteousness would be dissolved, and the door would open for the new school of Pagan philosophy appearing lately on the continent of Europe, whose creed is that a personal Deity is perhaps a scientific necessity, but that his moral character is mixed, evil deific attributes being mixed with the good.

One may say—I am sure *I* am in no danger of being betrayed into sanctimoniousness or immorality; for my whole conscious nature revolts at both the one and the other. But are we so sure that we are in no danger of a less noticeable decline of spiritual purity and vigor? It has been often observed that, in theological schools, the constant occupation of the mind in the study of divinity is very far from supporting a high religious temperature in the student. No doubt pastoral activity and sympathy do much to remedy this morbid suppression of the devotional by the scholastic habit, and yet I think the difficulty by no means ends at ordination.

Why should we not recognize an analogy between the influence of mechanical taskwork on the spiritual life of the ministry and on the intellectual force spent in secular pursuits? Every kind of work that deserves to be done at all deserves to be nourished and enlivened from a fountain of inspi-

ration higher than itself. The notion that a merchant or engineer, a lawyer or a physician, can get all the knowledge or enthusiasm needed in his employment while he is busy at its details, is fatal to liberal attainments or great achievements. There are two ways of doing all work. One is to succumb to the necessities of the task, to fill the time, to finish the job, to get a living, to plod abjectly through the wonted motions, with no spring, no light, no joy. As there are metallic craftsmen and automatic operatives, so there are preachers with whom, when the text lifts the gate, the mill-wheel of the sermon begins to revolve. They miss the charm which God has woven, for those who choose to catch it, about every honest calling, and above all others about the Christianizing of men and the communicating of God's life to the world. A service so intensely engaging ought not to lose its fascination by the repetition of its forms. Masters in any pursuit see their position not only on its actual but its ideal side. If we call this enthusiasm, it is an enthusiasm without which most of the intellectual monuments and glories of all time would never have been. When Anaxagoras, the astronomer, was rebuked for neglecting affairs and offices of state, he replied: "My concern is for my country in yonder sky." It is told of Dante that he went out to see a pageant in the streets, but was so profoundly preoccupied with other processions in other worlds that he came back not knowing that the pomp had gone by; and of Ritten-

house that he actually fainted with the excitement and delight of observing after long expectation the transit of the planet Venus across the disk of the sun.

The analogue to these examples of mental sensibility is the spiritual life in which every minister of Christ must maintain himself who would not have his ministration belittled in his hands, and himself at last a "cast-away." What ideality is to the artist, the poet, the originator anywhere, devotion or communion with God is to a parish priest. Indeed, the best scientific mind in our day in pure mathematics has argued that ideality in the investigation of nature is the connecting link between the natural and the supernatural, and forms a philosophical basis for the necessity of at least a theistic religion, with prayer, for every thinking man.

I used the word "cast-away." What is St. Paul's meaning in the ninth to the Corinthians? *Ἀδοκίμος*, you learn, is one who not merely comes in after the other runners at the end of the race, failing by reason of some want of strenuous effort while the contest is going on, but one who has been untrue to the very conditions and law of the race itself, who is defective in the preparation or training beforehand. He is precisely in the fault of the steward of the Mysteries of God who rushes through the round of his duties without having been made equal to them by secret spiritual discipline. In the Olympics, the amount of time

occupied by the public struggle, a trial of strength or speed, was almost nothing compared with the athlete's previous exercise. Days, weeks, months, with temperance, self-denial, self-bruising, were not too much to get the body in due order. The flash of human forms and straining limbs across the arena was but the short test of what the long antecedent drill was worth. The running, "not as uncertainly," the fighting, "not as one that beateth the air," depend on that patient keeping under, that enslaving of the flesh, in retirement, no eye looking on, no cheers or "cloud of witnesses" lending exhilaration. Ἰπωπιδάζω καὶ δουλαγωγέω. What will sustain both the tedious and the victorious trial? Not apathetic repetition. There can be no routine performance here. All Greece is looking on. Dear brethren, can you help asking yourselves how you will bear the application of this searching image of the Apostle to yourselves when you shall have become runners, watchmen, contestants in a different "agonizing?" whether, lest you should be cast-aways, you are as anxious to lay in fresh supplies of power, that you may save yourselves and them that will hear you?

If we examine the chief terms that designate the ministerial office, we shall see that they involve this doctrine of a supply of something in our own souls which has to be not merely kept from expiring, but added to and revived, to save us from degeneration and contempt. "Minister" implies something to be ministered. No more can be imparted

than is contained. No more can go out than comes in. For the thing ministered the Apostolic name is "grace." It is true that it is not of ourselves; it is of the Holy Ghost, and comes down from above. But it does not force its way down. There are conditions of receiving it as well as of imparting it, and they are vital conditions. We are not mere conduits of the divine stream, or pipes of the divine sound, or polished reflectors of the divine light. Adopt what theory of sacerdotal authority we may, we cannot pretend, unless we break loose from Scripture altogether, that in the Christian Church the New Testament term which designates ministerial service is separable from personal character, or that the priesthood is not wounded when the priest is not holy. From beginning to end the Bible never implies that we are only functionaries or operators. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." But you are to be more than vessel-bearers, more than vessels. This "grace," "gift," "life," "message," call it what we will, descending from on high, must enter us first as conscious receivers, becoming assimilated to the springs of our personal being. Otherwise we are like wooden cisterns from which the water is evaporated; the vessel itself cracks and is useless. Nothing will make up for the loss if there is not a direct drawing from the "wells of salvation." Nothing in pastoral activity can take the place of that power which comes directly, however silently, from an immediate contact with the unseen. Where there

is no vision the people perish—more accurately, are let loose, or run wild as barbarians. It was the darkest time in Israel when there was no “vision.” In the Patriarchate, the Hebrew commonwealth, the empire, while a strict ritual protected the worship of the Sanctuary, the moral strength of the nation was renewed by voices of prophets coming freshly forth from communion with God in solitude. Our divine Master was oftener alone than in the Temple. The power of his hours in the Mount is felt in his miracles among human dwellings and his preaching by the wayside. To what an inferior level the whole work and speech of the Apostles would be reduced but for their frequent retreats into solitude and their continuing instant in prayer !

It is time to mention two or three of the particular means of gathering and regathering this needful ministerial grace. We will place first what I have just alluded to—seasons of seclusion carefully provided for and guarded in the plan of living. Is it not remarkable, in the biography not only of ancient prophets and saints, but of great characters generally, that in some period of their lives they were held apart from men? Much intercourse with society tends to make clergymen ready and broad probably, but if it is perpetual it tends also to make the clerical character superficial and thin. Something is felt to be wanting. A minister has serious reason to suspect something wrong in himself if he finds that he is uneasy at being left

alone. The habits of the clergy are much changed. Formerly constant publicity was not expected, and it was rare. In country places the temptation to it is comparatively not very great; there are no book-stores or other convenient resorts; the families are scattered, and are not looking for visitors till towards the end of the day; public assemblies suitable for ministers are not very frequent. In cities and large towns it is otherwise. But it may be said of the theological student and the minister alike, wherever each may live, that for the most part when he goes into company it should be either directly or indirectly for the benefit of others. That was our Lord's example. He took pains to draw the disciples aside. "Come ye apart and rest awhile." Deserts and silences appear to have been regarded as a positive requirement in the economy of mediation. I know how easy it is for a pastor of executive tastes and abilities having manifold sorts of church work on hand, with hourly interruptions, to content himself with the reflection that he is meant to be a toils-man and a minute-man, pleading that so only his time is given to the people they should be satisfied. We are here, however, dealing with general principles of the spiritual life. I believe it is quite impossible to maintain it at its highest degree of sensibility or its healthiest action without so much systematic sequestration as shuts off the presence of all people, leaving an unobstructed access to the soul of the Spirit of God.

This rule may be supplemented with another.

It will do very much to sustain and vitalize personal piety, and to break up the narcotizing effect of routine, if while engaged in your various sacred offices you put forth special efforts of the will, to join your own personality with the function, so as to make what you read and say arraign, rebuke, encourage or comfort—as the case may be—your own soul. Consider the ministration addressed to yourself as much as to the congregation. My impression is that if, at the close of most of our services in church, we of the Ministry look back with this view, to see during how much of the time we were conscious of any such act as bringing home to ourselves the words we have used, or conscious of being directly in the presence of our Lord, we are humiliated. Yes, dear friends, we argue and debate and contend fluently about Christ's real presence; but how often when we are standing or kneeling in his holy place, speaking for him, speaking to him, touching perhaps the very symbols of his agony and seals of his mercy, do we realize what his presence is, or feel it in our souls that the eyes which searched Peter's heart search ours? that the ears which heard the prayers of pharisee and publican hear ours? Still more ashamed should we be if we should recall accurately what the thoughts glancing through the mind actually were. Were they thoughts of our pardon, or our performance? Of other men's impression of us, or of God's unerring judgment? Are we praying while we read prayers? In the Confession, is

it at all as if all mortal ears were removed, and the pronouns became singular? In the Lessons, does the Word of God strike in upon the heart to be heard there while it goes out to the audience? At the Eucharistic Feast, does the entrance of the life-giving food make our oneness with Christ and the Sacrifice of the Cross such realities to us that the accessories of the scene—numbers, music, postures, manipulations, manners at reception—recede to their due subordination? Is it not very significant that in God's earlier Church the priest did at the great offering first make atonement for his own sin and then for the sins of the people? In proportion as we get rid of ourselves, this personal appropriation of the divine nourishment, this personal realization of the worship that we lead, becomes possible and becomes blessed.

Much the same might be said of pastoral calls. He must make his way through them, it seems to me, with a shallow mind, who does not gather from them quite as much as he imparts; who does not bear away for his own warning or consolation as much as he leaves behind. All human lives, that touch one another at all, influence and fashion one another. It would be shameful if by what I see of the sufferings wrought by sin in any member of my flock my own sins were not rebuked and made hateful. It would be a terrible loss if each instance of saintly goodness or sweet trust or domestic magnanimity I see did not revive my own sluggish virtue, or quicken me a little in my inglorious and

halting way. But there is not the least reason to expect that anything of this kind will happen unless by voluntary attention you turn what Providence shows you of the working of His hand in these neighbor-lives into testimonies and commandments and promises for yourselves ; unless you cry with all your might, “ Show Thou me, by these side-lights about my path, the way that I should walk in ! ”

There is one other special way of keeping alive the spiritual sense—a way wonderful yet very practical. It is that while we are engaged about our hallowed work we recur habitually to the fact that we are surrounded and witnessed by supernatural companions in the invisible and spiritual world. As ministers going through divine service in church we are always to think of ourselves as ministering in the company of the Lord Jesus himself. We are also attended by a multitude of worshipers worshipping with us unseen, a never-disappointing throng even when we see before us only two or three or one. To believe in such companionships is an incalculable support. Why should we not believe in them ? Throughout the gospel history, from the Annunciation to the Ascension, we stand before opened heavens. Such is the naturalness of the supernatural, if we may say so, that Christians of every period reading Holy Scripture have felt no more surprise at the mention of a messenger from another world as appearing near the Son of Man than at any other biblical occur-

rence. The same is true of the lives of the Apostles. At the same time, am I not right in saying that we meet large numbers and even bodies of modern -Christians to whose habitual religious ideas and feelings all this other-world life is completely foreign? Are there not thousands and tens of thousands of them from whose religious convictions and associations, and sympathies, even in their most devout seasons, it all lies off—not exactly denied, but legendary or apparitional? Cherubim and Seraphim, St. Michael, and all the company of Heaven, Paradise, the returning spirits of Moses and Elias, are to them only the machinery of a poem. People treat them as dry critics do the epic supernaturalism of Dante and Milton. Has all this no effect on practical piety, on character, on worship, and the whole service of the Ministry? When living glories have vanished from the skies, leaving nothing there but soulless spheres about which astronomers dispute whether their frosts and fires permit any life to be in them at all, when everything in space beyond the Andes and Himalayas is reduced to barrenness, and no intelligence but a distant God is allowed above the human head, though living creatures in countless gradations are thick all the way *down* to the germ-cell, will nothing be missed and nothing be lost from the spiritual part of man himself? It seems to me impossible. Nature, says Leibnitz, never makes a leap; he thereby gives as grand a truth to theology as to physics. If nature makes no leap from the

germ-cell to Adam, she makes none from Adam to Him who said, "Let there be light," and hangeth the earth upon nothing. The interval between Deity and us is not empty. I think we see increasing defects in a too terrestrial religion. Little by little it is attenuated. Faith is frost-bitten. Every thing is begrudged to the mind except inquiry and doubt. One doctrine or ordinance after another is rationalized. At last Jesus himself is followed rather as a leader and reformer of the race, the manliest of men, than as the atoning "Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Social science cries, "Behold the man!" with Pilate, rather than "My Lord and my God!" with St. Thomas. Some richness and depth of grace, some power of prayer, some tender quickness of sensibility, must disappear when this world becomes more and more, and the other less and less. We shall do better—O, how much better!—to rise up and lie down, to live and walk and worship, to go about our daily pastoral work, to preach and minister sacraments, as those who "have come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant."

Finally, do not be discouraged. Humility is not discouragement. So far as my reading and mem-

ory go, a keen conviction of personal unworthiness has appeared as a permanent element in the spiritual frame of all memorable ministers whose interior life has in any way been opened to the world. In a very large proportion of cases, that conviction has been attended by a deep feeling of incompetency to the high calling. This would seem to be just as common with the most distinguished as the most obscure. What we call success, celebrity, admiration, have apparently nothing to do with it. I could easily fill up an hour with sincere confessions of this sort from famous preachers. What could more impressively elevate the office of a Christian teacher than this solemn undertone of self-dissatisfaction, sounding along through the whole line of holy leaders from Pentecost to this hour, "Not unto us, not unto us"? It is a confession of "that mysterious secret" which "keeps sweeping from us evermore;" an unrealized ideal, an unfulfilled hope, a grief of short-coming just as sad in the weary heart of the veteran priest and soldier who lies down to rest at fourscore, as in the sobered spirit of the young deacon at the first anniversary of his ordination. We may take it as one of the human confirmations of the promise of the resurrection—that after death we are to live and in some way minister again, where no such limitations will close us in, no such chains drag at our feet, no such awful abyss separate between what we would be and what we are. A Christian's despair of perfection on earth is a prophecy of his immortality.

It ought to be impossible, the Lord being forever at the head of his Kingdom, that his officers and workmen should be disheartened. The most solitary missionary at the farthest outpost in the darkest continent does not work alone. All live and serve together in that one Kingdom, in the presence of all its powers, under the eyes of its superhuman agents, sustained by its everlasting realities. Over them, however it may be with the men of this world, it must be that the angels of God descend and ascend. Above all, in the midst of all, not far from any one of his servants, stands the Shepherd of all the shepherds, the Light of every prophet who teaches, the Advocate of every comforter who heals and consoles human hearts. He speaks and we hear, "Without me ye can do nothing." It is the heart of Christ that speaks. When Moses and Elias had passed out of sight, on the Mount of Transfiguration, the disciples saw "Jesus only." But he had shown them that the veil is taken away and that the gates of heavenly glory are not shut, day or night.

SELF-SACRIFICE.

IN the two former conferences it has been found that the foremost demand on modern Christianity is that of a revival of the spirit of self-consecration, which is a spirit of sacrifice ; and that this renewal of apostolic life must be begun and be led, like other spiritual revivals in the Church Catholic, by a self-sacrificing clergy. This goes to the root of all holy obedience, as the Cross itself is the symbol and interpreter of the Christian faith.

The truth is sharp-edged. It makes large drafts on personal courage, as well as on other elements of personal religion. It makes religion costly. It is not popular in the pulpit ; it is less and less so. We hear little of it from popular preachers. The parochial system succeeds in a certain fashion without it, and succeeds a good deal in smothering it. That, however, is not of great moment to us here. We are near to Calvary, and drawing nearer day by day. You are not taking for your pattern the young ruler who went away sorrowful. I gladly believe you want to hear nothing less than the whole law of God, and are heroic enough to bear the reproach that fell upon your crucified Lord.

Compare the clergy of our own day with the clergy of the Pentecostal and Apostolic period. Down to the last moment of the evangelic history the standard of ministerial consecration is not lowered. For example, except for condemnation or warning, we have no knowledge of any minister there selecting his field of labor for its external advantages, its income or social privileges ; none of a clergyman leaving one place for another on the offer of superior honors or emoluments ; none of a clergyman putting a money-value at all on his work ; none of a clergyman shrinking from any task or avoiding it or diminishing it on account of its hardship ; none of a clergyman disparaging a brother-clergyman to his own betterment by contrast ; none of a clergyman subordinating the religious edification or harmony of the Christian body or any part of it to his own self-will, or to any scheme, opinion, or course of proceeding of his own choosing. These things all came in. But each one of you young men, candidates for the Holy Ministry, speaking from your higher manhood no less than from your baptismal vow and churchly nurture, will say that they came of apostasy ; that they do not belong to the original integrity and purity of the Kingdom of Christ.

You will not wish to break the force of this affirmation by objecting—*tempora mutantur*. The serious question remains whether *nos mutamur*, and if so, on what warrant we are changed. It may be said with some force that the early age had

no parishes like ours, few settled pastors with large families, less need of a long and costly course of preparatory study, was less prohibitory as to ministers doing secular work, and insisted less on a clergyman's keeping up a certain style of living corresponding with that of his well-provided parishioners. I look back over my several items of contrast, and I do not see that any of these last-mentioned considerations so touches one of them as to excuse us from a conscientious attention to their moral obligation. With a keen sense of ill-desert, I cannot honestly allow that for me or for you the old Gospel requirement of self-renunciation on the ordination threshold can be relaxed in the least. I go further, and submit that our modern non-conformity to the law of Christ and his Apostles in this respect, with all its specious excuses and palliations, may probably be a cause of the slowness and coldness and weakness of the Church, to say nothing of the unbelief and carelessness of the world. The first recommendation I should make, therefore, in this subject is that you should form a habit of frequent comparison between your own life, as respects self-denial or the willingness for it, and that of the men whom our Lord chose and sent out to represent and preach him to mankind. "The ground-work of all clerical education," says M. Perraud, a continental student of history and theology, "lies in Holy Scripture and the earliest tradition. The first laws of our Apostolic ministry have not changed since the time when Andrew and

Peter, James and John, left their nets to become fishers of men, and we still seek the first rules of ecclesiastical perfection among those primitive fathers and first councils which breathe the very purest and healthiest spirit of Christianity."

In the next place, in your preparatory self-examinations here, which ought to be renewed every day and deepened every Lent, it seems to me you should follow the New Testament method of measuring, arraigning, and judging yourself more by absolute and independent principles, however conscientious in making the application of those principles, than by literal rules or a formal directory prescribing a daily religious regimen. I would speak with some diffidence on this point, because, though I am very sure of the expediency in my own case, I am aware that some good men, whose piety I venerate, think otherwise. I can profit myself a little, but not very much, by these fixed allowances and limitations, or by determined degrees of physical privation. Thus, for instance, I see that both the Gospel and the Church demand that we should fast. Fast, then, we must; for those are God's teachers, and God knows us better than we know ourselves. Truth received from Him we must both practice and teach; and here as in other places He graciously permits us to learn the value of his ordinance by its chastening effect upon ourselves. But there is another truth. There are so many kinds and shapes of personal sacrifice, pertaining to other and much less manageable parts of my

complex constitution, where I can lay on the cross to as good purpose, and where it hurts so much more, that the idea of keeping up a state of spiritual elevation chiefly by a constant reminder to reduce the amount of bodily nourishment—most clergymen's labors being what they are—is one difficult to be invested to me with reality and religious power. It is harder for me to regulate my tongue than my palate. I suspect most men addicted to studious habits and public speech have a more dangerous appetite for literary indulgence and the luxury of reputation than for meat or wine. I do not see why we should not believe, if we are in earnest at all, that temperaments are meant to be unlike in this respect as in so many others, and that, as physically one man's "meat is another man's poison," so morally one man's sufficiency may be another man's excess, or one man's fasting another man's temptation. Believing this, and seeing that the New Testament does not treat the body as evil, and, while laying down positive law as to the duty of literal fasting does not lay down positive law or definition as to the mode and extent of the duty, seeing that Christianity as a religion is distinguished in this respect from other systems, I should yet, on the other hand, be only the more scrupulous to put myself in mind that the keeping under of the body is one of the foremost obligations of the Christian priesthood; that this voluntary yoking appertains to every portion of our being, imagination and desire, ambition

and will, as well as outward acts ; and that no purgation needful to this discipline should be counted too severe. In the words of one who has wisely counselled many in our calling, "It is undeniable that the Gospel makes it a duty to keep the body in a subordinate place, in subjection to the soul, in perpetual obedience and fitness to be the holy witness of all spiritual actions." This law flows out of the supreme central fact of the Incarnation—our Lord taking our flesh upon him that our bodies may be made clean by his body, and our blood by his blood. "We perceive at once that there is a pampering of the flesh which is inconsistent with a holy life. There must be some subjugation of the lower part in order to keep it from that horrid inversion in which appetites and passions acquire dominancy. All habits of real self-indulgence are to be broken up. We form in our better moments the ideal of a life in which character is produced by moderation, temperance, reserve in things lawful, frugality, the cutting off of pleasures which are seducing or in any degree enslaving." The vessels being earthen, we are liable to lower our vocation and enfeeble our moral power by too much relish for what we eat or drink, by talking too much about it, by letting too much be made of it in the ordering of time or work or in displacing serious duties. I should be less than faithful if I did not further express my own conviction that piety and the Church suffer less from excess in food, which nourishes the body, than in

narcotic luxuries which certainly do not nourish it. This may be also the place to say that there is a sort of selfishness not generally included in this class of sins, but which I think belongs here. It begets more mischief than would ever be suspected from anything we read, perhaps because some of the laity, moved by an honorable sentiment of shame for a clergyman who is not ashamed of himself, often cover it up and pass it over. I mean the sin of running in debt, needlessly and heedlessly, from mere self-pleasing and lack of conscience. No man, whatever his gifts or his devotion, can obviate that mischief except by stopping the transgression, and the place to stop it is where it begins. We hear frequent warnings against church debts—none too frequent. But if you knew all there is to be known you would consider as even worse than those the unreasonable, facile, or chronic indebtedness of clergymen in their private affairs, exasperating the irreligious and bringing religion itself into contempt.

From these grosser offences pass on to notice indulgences less carnal, but still very much “of the earth earthy.” There are not many days in a parish priest’s life when he has not some direct occasion to illustrate the spirit of his priesthood; to show that he knows what the Cross he preaches means by putting aside his own tastes or convenience for others. In a very nearly unerring ratio, how much there is of that in his pastoral office, how much prompt giving up,—cheerful and manly

and unhesitating,—for the least attractive or agreeable, the least important or influential, the poorest or the worst, so much power and true success he has in the long run. It is striking to see that so deeply is this vicarious idea wrought into human nature itself that even the Christless church of the Positivists, too proud to call what it believes by its Christian name, is yet forced to find room for it in its creed, because God has made so large a place for it in humanity, and calls it altruism.

An exceedingly thoughtful clergyman, eminent before he died, made a practice of writing down in his private diary what he called “homiletical paragraphs.” One day toward the end of December he entered there what he whimsically called a *concio ad me ipsum*. It runs—“The last Lord’s Day of the year has arrived, and on reviewing your labors you must feel you have not stirred up the gift that is in you. Your talent, *qualiscunque sit*, has been too much laid in the napkin. You have bestowed your time and labor on inferior and secondary things. One thing is needful. That a man is a minister is no token that he shall not be cast into hell fire.” Elsewhere he writes—“The young minister who is evidently concentrating his chief thoughts on something other than his ministry will be a drone if not a Demas. He must very likely lay his account to forego some part of that reputation which comes from erudition and literature. Leighton said to some one who admired his books, ‘One devout thought outweighs them

all.' Look not at the quietude, respectability, or refining culture, but at the life-long embassy from the Redeemer for lost men. There are legitimate occasions when a minister may thoroughly relax his mind, and I hope you will despise the sanctimonious prescriptions of those who would debar clergymen from any summer repose or resort to springs or sea-side. Nevertheless in the ordinary ministerial day there should be no hour not devoted to something helpful toward the great work. Such are the discouragements of a genuine cross-bearing ministry that, without the Master's own spirit of sacrifice sooner or later, the dilettante pulpiteer will throw off the burden and begin to seek his ease, or else preach for itching ears or phonographic reporters." It will require no very strenuous or heroic spirit to go acceptably enough through most of your public services; but it is hard to toil without visible returns; to see your most sacred endeavors coarsely handled; to find spiritual things profanely criticised; to spend wretched hours cheerfully among ignorant, unclean, petulant, gossiping, weak-minded people. Nothing that I know of will carry one graciously and gladly through that but the Christ in his heart.

I say *graciously*: for in all charities between person and person, how much depends on the manner! and may not Christ be in the manner as well as in the heart? It impresses me very much that the larger number of complaints which a Bishop is obliged to hear made by parishioners against their

spiritual guides are of this character—complaints not of gigantic or damning iniquities, fraud or drunkenness or adultery or blasphemy—but of sharp speeches, rough and cruel words, impatience, selfish neglects of the poor or families in humble life, overbearing measures, unkind and ungentle manners. Of course many of these grievances are imaginary, and more of them are too trivial in themselves to be recorded or remembered. But let them accumulate and they form a blemish on the ministerial character. They gradually and silently raise a barrier between the shepherd and his flock. *That* shepherd is not giving his life for the sheep. His fine discourse neither comforts nor persuades. The pastoral tie is weakened. The people do not say lovingly in their hearts, This man cares for us for Jesus' sake.

It is hard, undoubtedly, when you are in the midst of a train of unusually productive thought in your study, which has come slowly and by hard pulling of many hours, where you feel as if interruption would be overthrow, to hear the knock or bell that snaps the thread short off, and summons you to listen to the incoherent, stammering story of some "foolish body" who may not indeed have said in her heart that there is no God, but precisely because she believes in her heart that there is a God, has come to you to get you to tell her what God is doing with her, and how He can be a father to her and to her children when their earthly father is a monster: it is hard, and it is one of

those hardships which you will not find the average citizen or the popular lecturer or the *Saturday Review* likely to mention when they are flippantly discussing the trials or the failures of the clerical profession. But if you can meet it gallantly, nay more, if you can pass from your books and writing-table to this poor woman, crying out of the coasts of her Tyre on your parish circuit, with anything like the look or tone of him who stopped and listened whenever Jew or Gentile beggar besought him, you will be quite as certain to appear among his priests and kings hereafter as if you had finished out your "happy train of thought" in the handsomest fashion, and gruffly told the perplexed parishioner at your door to go away and come again at a more convenient season. It is hard to see your best days for study cut to pieces or frittered away; but one of the most efficient city ministers that this country has produced, who had a great deal of that sort of grief to bear, used to say, "Always tell me if any one calls to see me; the man that wants to see me is the man that I want to see." It is hard to ride over a mountain in a storm of a dark night to give the comfortable sacrament to a rich man's servant and then be left to pay the hire of the horse you drove, unthanked; but there is no evidence that St. Paul had hard thoughts of Pagan masters for not transporting him to and fro when he visited their slaves, or ever mentioned it to Priscilla and Aquila. It is hard to be addressed by a noisy, impudent upstart in your parish as if

you were a huckster ; but if you can so manage your temper and face and voice as to let him or others feel that you belong to an order of silent victors, taking their strength from him who walked on in majesty when the rabble cried "Crucify him," and who stood unmoved to be spit upon, you really cannot much regret your opportunity. When we get well up above our little irritations and disputes we have momentary perceptions at least of how grand it would be if all of us, officers of the great King, went through our drudgeries with that easy swing of conscious "power from above" which is as far from petulance as it is from fear.

In the ordination office, where it is set forth "to how high a dignity and how weighty an office and charge" a priest is called, you notice that the title "watchman" is in a group with two others, and that they are in a certain order—messengers, watchmen, stewards. Then follows an explication, where teaching and premonishing are mentioned first, and the busy missionary service of seeking and bringing in sheep that are scattered abroad is named afterward, not as a duty of a separate class merely, but as belonging in its degree to every Presbyter ordained—"feeding and providing for the Lord's family" not being omitted. The meaning is that no part of the holy office is rightly discharged without the others, and especially that to be a persuasive messenger one must be a stirring seeker and a tireless worker. In the early Church

the exposition or homily was joined, through the Gospel and Epistle for the day, to the Eucharistic celebration. Quite as palpable is the bond in the primitive system between the preaching and the out-of-door travel and every-day visiting of the sacred shepherds. There comes a temptation, however, which nothing but self-sacrifice will overcome. Late at night you are in a well-lighted and comfortable "study." Outside, the weather is forbidding. You sophisticate with yourself. You say, "To be sure, over the mountain yonder, or out on the marsh, or down in the slums, there is a sick woman whose baby has scarlet fever and is said not to have been baptized; there is a smart hack-driver who has lately stopped drinking, and beating his wife, and I told her I would come this evening and help her encourage him; there are some orphan children that may or may not have bread in the morning; there are two or three confirmation candidates that I should not be so likely to find at any other time; there is that contumacious vestryman who has got hold of a bit of parish gossip, and got hold of it, as usual, wrong-end first, and will make more trouble with it in twenty-four hours than I can set right in a month unless I see him; and there is Nora, the washer-woman, who is starving for want of work, and she ought to know about the place I heard of to-day, and so make sure of it to-morrow. But no! They can wait. I have here a capital subject for an uncommonly interesting sermon. Somebody has told

me that my special talent lies in the pulpit, and I half think so myself. There will be several hundred people in the church, and they are of more account than half-a-dozen uncultivated minds in the outskirts. Preaching is a divine ordinance, and must be attended to at any rate. I shall be excused if I sit here and write." Of the effect of that dastardly sophistry on the man's own soul or its salvation I am not now to speak. What is the judgment passed upon it by the Apostolic Ministry? St. Peter might have reasoned in the same way if he had chosen, in his room at the house of Simon, the tanner, by the sea-side at Joppa. What I desire you to realize is that the sermon you make under those conditions is a sham, as you are a sham, and that God does not use shams for any permanent or glorious upbuilding of his Kingdom anywhere. Just how he will insert debility and failure into your ministry you may never know. It is enough to know "he cannot deny himself." Shirk your pastoral work, your humane work, your work of love, for the sake of your preaching, and you sap your preaching at its root. It was a pathetic but pungent satire of a dying lady, poor but polite to the last, who was asked *in extremis* if her clergyman should be sent for: "No, I thank you, I think not; he has never been to see me in these six years since I moved into the parish, and it would be a little awkward to have the ceremony of an introduction to my acquaintance just as I am breathing my last." Quite as good was the remark

of an older person on her minister's habits: "Six days of the week he is invisible, and the seventh he is incomprehensible." The "invisible" goes to account for the "incomprehensible."

Another form of self-sacrifice, suggested in some of the allusions already made, is a voluntary restraint imposed from Christian principle on self-will. A serious difficulty arises here in discriminating between a righteous determination to adhere to a chosen course against unjustifiable opposition or to maintain an independent stand against conflicting parties, on the one hand, and a stiff adherence to such a course or position because they are ours, and because our pride and consistency are involved in them, on the other. Conscience and will reside in a very near neighborhood to one another in some men's natures. We walk between two perils. One traitor sells his Master for silver, or favor, or comfort; another gets angry, deceives himself, sees in every opponent an enemy of God, and imagines he is serving Christ when he is only having his own way. It would be interesting if we could lay down on one side those parochial disasters which have come about by a rector's surrendering right for policy, and on the other side those where he has fought fatally for a prejudice or a prerogative. It appears to be greatly for the clearing up of our doubt and for the rectitude of our souls, as well as for the justice and safety of our actions in such cases, if we can wait a while, and keep asking, from day to day or hour to hour,

“How much of this zeal is for God, how much for myself?” Time and this scrutiny will both help us. God will help us through them. There was once a large religious community where various interests were represented under a wise head. Three members fell into a jealous contention. It was a quarrel for official precedence. The matter had to be referred to the presiding officer. It was expected without a question that he would assign the coveted post of honor to some one of the three. I have so often felt his judgment to be applicable to a large class of our familiar dissensions that I quote from it: “The question raised among the three persons mentioned in your letter proves too plainly that they have all as yet made but little progress in the school of Jesus Christ. When the Disciples were guilty of disputing who should have the pre-eminence they were still untaught in the lessons of his humility, and had not fully received the outpourings of his grace. We who are so ready to speak of the spirit of Christ, and are called to spread abroad the sweet odor of his meekness among men, are utterly without excuse if we tolerate in ourselves such unworthiness. We ought to blush at any symptom thereof. If we judge our relative gifts ourselves, or take to ourselves the glory of them, we are guilty of encroachment on his divine judgment and forestall his sentence. In accordance with this principle, binding on all Christians, I can only condemn all the three partakers in this disagreement. Every power com-

mitted to us by God is to be used for the advancement of grace, not of self-will. If any one of our members seek to take the lowest place in the Gospel Feast, we may fairly say to him in Christ's own words, 'Friend, come up higher.' But it is otherwise with those who affect superiority. All such we would send to learn of St. Paul what was the mind that was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God made himself of no reputation, and thought it no indignity to his Godhead to bear with and even to seek out all the humiliations of life. I beg all those persons who have had thoughts so opposed to the Christian and still more to the priestly mind, to repent heartily, and to spend a week in special devotions to the humiliations of Jesus Christ. I would have them consider that they are both Christians and priests, and that they ought to esteem these honors more highly than any other title or rank." St. Paul lays down for us, after a stern rebuke of personal and partisan strifes, the law and the motive of all self-sacrifice in our mutual relations: "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good for edification:—for even Christ pleased not himself."

We may follow this law of self-denial into a region of questions more subtle and perhaps more perplexing. What if I, as a teacher, rector, priest, should find myself holding some exceptional views on some question of belief or practice more or less in debate, views which, if I were known to hold them, might bring me under suspicion or even into

trouble with my parish or Bishop ? They are views which some persons share with me ; there may be a school or party interested in them ; I care enough about them to wish to promote them ; they constitute a “ cause ; ” in that cause there is a certain fascination. Other feelings, then, are enlisted than that of simple loyalty to the Saviour. Then there will evidently be a temptation to duplicity. Toward my brethren, toward my Bishop, toward a part of my congregation, toward some clear and strong soul that I am afraid of, I might use concealment. Keeping back what others have a right to know, doing what I should be called to account for if it were known, and doing it from private fancy or party-spirit or self-will, I am first a coward and then a deceiver. Let me call your earnest attention, gentlemen, to the poisonous influence which at this point may threaten the soul’s health. It is unspeakably worse than the mere holding or avowing of any honest opinion could be. The first yielding to it is one step toward something pernicious. What self-sacrifice requires in the case is immediate and unreserved candor. A clergyman who carries about that sort of secret with him, equivocating, giving unreal reasons or evasive explanations, carries in his breast perilous stuff. He may go very reverently to God’s altar, but he goes with something very like a lie in his right hand. He may make clean the cup and platter of ceremony, but he bears away a stain on his heart. Beware of the faintest beginnings of devotional duplicity.

There remains yet another set of relations where the spirit of the Cross finds occasion for a most careful and delicate exercise—the relations of the clergy with one another as fellow-stewards; not only members of the same profession, but far more than that, workers together under the same chief Shepherd.

There are different ways of looking at this mutual tie. One is the world's way or the political way, contemplating rights rather than duties, watching against intrusion rather than for occasions for generosity, more anxious to get what the law of the Digest allows than to fulfil the law of love. It would express itself after this manner: "As the head of a parish I am a legal officer; as having a living to get and my way to make in the world I must be on the look-out for my dues, my reputation, my opportunities. My clerical brethren are in a certain sense my competitors; if our neighborhood is very close, it may be that what they get I lose—hearers, support, popularity, success. They have the same protection and the same chance that I have. Let us all take care of ourselves." What type of Christian character this doctrine reveals, what spiritual tone in a spiritual order, and what estimation of it is made by shrewd observers, need not be said. There is certainly another way. The question with you now is which way you will take. I think our clergy, over and beyond personal attachments, love and respect one another. There may be no bitterness, no malice, no inten-

tional injustice. Can we say there is no evil speaking? There is a great deal of it. We of this profession are of a critical habit. As students we are trained to criticism as an art. There are few ways in which self-complacency encourages itself more agreeably than by comparisons of one's own work with the work of others, pointing out blemishes and mistakes that appear along the same line of effort with our own. Then it is a fashion of the whole community to discuss the minister. He is the only man who, two or three times every week, stands up in the eyes of several hundred people who are in the habit of talking together, and exhibits before them his personal endowments. Like the medical, the clerical is a profession talked about. It exercises gifts and deals with subjects which everybody thinks he understands. There is abundant opportunity for comparison of merits. As we are placed, subject to this publicity, with an unparalleled tax on the power of the brain, generally dependent on a measure of public favor for any degree of success, exposed to the utter unscrupulousness of domestic and social gossip, I think we are severely tried. If a majority of the people had sense and religion enough to lay the principal stress on the devotional element of the church service, or even on those traits of a faithful and godly clergyman which are commonly attainable, the case would be better. Yet here we are, Providence with us, the promises ours, the work itself glorious with the glory of our Lord. How

will you treat that great temptation to professional jealousy and disparagement? Will you fall in with the bad custom, or will you establish a custom of magnanimity? Will you condescend to that contemptible gossip about other clergymen's talents or want of them, their foibles, their blunders, their laughable idiosyncrasies? Will you swell the stream of this exceedingly small talk with all its hurtful and cruel ingredients, or will you check it? Will you make it your habit when you speak of a brother to speak what is true and good only? In the frequent prostration of our hearts before God when we hear the "Ye who do truly," and in opening these hearts frankly to one another, ought we not to accuse ourselves and make new resolutions? How often some clergyman, for the most part irreproachable, without the least intention to be calumnious or even unfriendly, when he has taken charge of a parish vacated only just before, says to his Bishop: "I am trying to do something here, but I have found matters in a wretched condition—disorder and neglect everywhere, families not visited, children not looked up, slovenly services, some persons alienated, records imperfect, all at loose ends; but I shall try to straighten it out after awhile, only give me time." Now, that is a species of detraction. If all the facts are not just as they are stated it is slander, and the slandered brother is not there to defend himself; even if they are, the manly thing is to go silently to work to mend and make and edify, and in due time the

reformation will appear, and you will not lose one jewel in your crown. The oddest part of it is that this same doleful account has been known to be given of the same parish time after time through a series of short settlements, till one marvels how it happens that through such a succession of ruins the parish should not have perished outright, or else through such a succession of improvements should not have become a prodigy of perfection; whereas to outside observation it appears to be neither much better nor much worse at any time than the parishes all around it. It is very seldom that a rector taking charge cannot say with some truth, if he wants to say it, "Other men labored, and I have entered into their labors." We belittle ourselves by little judgments; may God forgive us! May he give you such heavenly grace that out of all your sore battles with self—self-indulgence, self-admiration, self-pleasing, self-will, self-praise, you may come conquerors and more than conquerors, bringing with you in fruitful abundance, "that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead!"

Almost afraid, my young brethren, to say to you as of myself those more general and lofty counsels into which I feel that we ought to rise as this short series of instructions draws to an end, I borrow two or three brief passages from a venerable and saintly mind of two hundred years ago. "Let us be content to hide ourselves in God, until, at our

Lord Jesus Christ's last coming, all things are revealed. Let us freely give him this world and all that is in it, if he will but give us Heaven. The day will come when he will show that those who have been most prominently seen in his work have not always done the most; and sometimes they who are the least worthy receive most credit in this life, because in his wisdom he does not choose that his faithful servants should run the risk of having their reward here. It is well to be content to be forgotten ourselves, so that through us God alone may dwell in the hearts of men. If we give ourselves heartily to our dear Lord, entering into the spirit of his Incarnation, then, without losing anything of that original attitude, we shall go forth as he came forth from the Father. We shall apply ourselves to earthly matters, hearken to the words of imperfect men, learn their languages, and accept rather with patience than with self-seeking or complacency such application to secular studies as is needful for God's glory. But in order to do this in holiness, and according to the mind of Christ, we must give ourselves wholly to him, entreating him to keep us free from the spiritual infirmities which beset those much given to literary pursuits. Our aim must be to live the simple life of faith, ruling our conduct by our duties, not by our feelings. The real necessity for us in spiritual things is that we should be busy in doing, not in looking about to see whether we are doing or not. Above all things, we must walk before God with

truth, with a single mind. The smallest actions done for God tend to our sanctification. He tells us that it is so. Never pause to dwell on what you may feel in yourself, of weakness or of strength, but live on in that simple faith without squandering your energies or analyzing your emotions. Do not imagine yourself to be weak because you feel weak, or strong because you feel strong. St. Peter believed himself to be strong, but was weak; St. Paul believed himself to be weak, though he was strong. You cannot be free except 'the Son shall make you free.' Without him you can do nothing. We are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God."

"Without me ye can do nothing." Let that be the word we all carry away with us, dear friends, and keep with us to the end—a word of warning, a word of Almighty promise! Let us all say it back to Him here, this moment, with our whole heart, from the depths of penitence and humility, and so say it to the end—Without thee, O Christ, we can do nothing.

These days of comparative seclusion, in this Seminary life, are passing away. When you have once begun your august work, the most blessed refreshments you come to will be but Elims, short intervals between seas and deserts, between march and march, between things behind to be forgotten and things before to be attained. What is done for you here, what you do for yourselves, will all be revealed. It will not save you. It may be

easily thrown away, or lost. Will those you shall minister to, the souls in your cure, see any mark of the cross upon you, any sign in your bearing, conversation, preaching, priesthood, life, that you have been taught by the Son of God? Will those you live with see it? Will those eyes which are never dimmed and never err see it?

The everlasting Love be patient with us, giving you already the power of an endless life, while you look for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ!

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

[illegible]

